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Musayib's new maternity hospital under construction

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MUSAYIB, Iraq— Adjacent the rubble of the deteriorating 1983 Musayib Maternity Hospital, a new facility is emerging. The new \$5 million maternity hospital in Musayib city, Babil Province, will open this fall replacing the nearby facility.

Long undersized for a doubled patient population with no hope of expansion, the old hospital is finally making way to a new, modern facility that will assist in re-establishing reliable healthcare for the people in Musayib and the surrounding area.

"The new hospital will offer Musayib advanced medical services," said Ali Edreise, an Iraqi civil engineer with the Gulf Region Division. "The people here are very excited, very pleased with this development and are definitely looking forward to its opening."

During Saddam Hussein's regime the healthcare system in Iraq declined, he said. "Many doctors, surgeons and nurses left the country during and after the war and to avoid assassination and kidnapping. Due to improved security conditions in the area, the new hospital is expected to employ 100 medical staff while benefiting thousands," Edreise added.

Once finished, the new two-story, 11,000-square-foot facility will include an emergency room, outpatient area, operating rooms, laboratories, X-Ray department, pharmacy, administration wing, doctors' residence, laundry and services department, modern communication system, and much more. "The project is 80 percent complete and the construction firm...is scheduled to complete the work in November," added Winbourne "Mac" Drake, Gulf Region Division construction representative.

The new hospital is just one example of the many healthcare improvements being planned by the Babil Provincial Reconstruction Team in collaboration with the Government of Iraq Ministry of Health and the Babil Provincial Council.

The first phase of those efforts will bring more than \$50 million worth of medical equipment to Babil's 13 hospitals. "Three of those hospitals are currently unable to see patients due to the lack of basic medical equipment," said Capt. Benjamin Kenion, PRT Babil's Civil Affairs Essential Services team chief.

The Ministry's Iraqi Strategic Review Board noted that the initiative represents a good example of cost sharing between donors and Iraqi national resources while supporting critical needs in the health sector of Babil. The ISRB also commented that they are hopeful this project can be replicated in other governorates.

"The PRT is working with Globus Relief in the United States to obtain fully functional used hospital equipment for all of Babil's major hospitals," Kenion said. "Globus tests and warranties all equipment, which includes patient beds, side tables, infusion pumps, blood pressure machines, portable suction devices and portable nebulizers."

Before requesting the equipment, the Hospital's staff in Babil conducted a needs assessment and compiled a list of equipment that the PRT submitted to Globus. "The first shipment of equipment could arrive as soon as this fall, assuming the Governor approves the contract in the near future," Kenion added.

Medical care is only one of many areas that the PRT, Government of Iraq Ministries, Babil Provincial officials and the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, are working on together to restore essential services throughout Babil. "Using funding from the United States and the



Construction of a \$5 million new maternity hospital for the city of Musayib in southern Iraq's Babil Province is 80 percent complete and scheduled to be completed this fall. "This project has employed hundreds of local Iraqis and is essential in ensuring the local community has reliable healthcare," explained U.S. Army Corps of Engineers construction representative Winbourne "Mac" Drake with Gulf Region Division's South District. "When finished, the project will benefit thousands of residents in Musayib and the surrounding area." (USACE photos by Alicia Embrey)



Newborn incubator area in Musayib's old hospital built in 1983. (USACE Photo by Alicia Embrey)

Government of Iraq, we're working with our Iraqi partners to improve infrastructure, essential services, governance, rule of law and the local economy," Kenion said.

More than 638 projects, including roads, schools, electricity projects, water treatment facilities, and primary health care clinics, have been completed in the five south central province areas of Babil, Karbala, Wassit, Al Qadisiyah, and An Najaf over the past year, valued collectively at about \$700 million.

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